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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/627,449	07/25/2003	Venkiteswaran Subramanian	0113.450US	5224
27123	7590	03/22/2006	EXAMINER	
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P. 3 WORLD FINANCIAL CENTER NEW YORK, NY 10281-2101			JOHANNSEN, DIANA B	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1634	

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-34, drawn to methods of preparing recombinant nucleic acids, classified in at least, for example, class 435, subclasses 6 and 91.2.
 - II. Claims 35-50, drawn to nucleic acids, classified in at least, for example, class 536, subclass 23.6.
 - III. Claims 51-54, drawn to methods of conferring herbicide tolerance in a plant, classified in at least, for example, class 800, subclass 278.
 - IV. Claims 55-60, drawn to methods of predicting herbicide efficacy, classified in at least, for example, class 435, subclass 468.
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I, and II and IV, are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product. See MPEP § 806.05(h). In the instant case, the nucleic acids of Invention II may be used in a materially different process, such as in methods of synthesizing polypeptides. Further, searching Inventions II and I, and/or II and IV, together would impose a serious search burden. The inventions have a separate status in the art as shown by their different classifications. Further, art relevant to the products of Invention II might or might not be relevant to the methods of Inventions I and IV, while Inventions I and IV require text searches unrelated to the products of Invention II.

Inventions II and III are unrelated because the products of Invention III are not used or otherwise involved in the process of Group III.

Inventions I, III and IV are patentably distinct methods requiring different reagents and method steps to achieve different objectives. Invention I requires the recombination of variant nucleic acids and a step of library screening to achieve the objective of obtaining a "recombinant herbicide tolerance nucleic acid." Invention III requires a step of "whole genome shuffling" in a plant cell to achieve the objective of "acquiring or improving an herbicide tolerance activity in a parental plant cell." Invention IV requires steps such as cell transformation and propagation to achieve the objective of predicting herbicide efficacy. A search of more than one of Inventions I, III and IV would impose a serious burden. First, each method has a different status in the art as shown by the different classifications of Invention I, III and IV. Further, searching more than one of the distinct inventions would be burdensome. Each Invention requires a text search for different reagents and method steps, and the consideration of different types of prior art references.

3. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification and recognized divergent subject matter, and because Inventions I-IV require different searches that are not co-extensive, examination of these distinct inventions would pose a serious burden on the examiner, and therefore restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Species election

4. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:

With regard to Group I, the multitude of species of parental nucleic acids set forth in dependent claims 9-12, 17, and 21-22;

With regard to Group II, the multitude of different parental nucleic acids set forth in claims 38-50.

The species are independent or distinct because each of the recited parental nucleic acids has a different sequence/structure as well as a different function. Thus, the different molecules are not, e.g., obvious variants that may be substituted one for the other, and art related to one such molecule would not necessarily be pertinent to any other such molecule. Each such species would require a different text search and the consideration of different types of prior art references, and thus a search of more than one such species would impose a serious search burden. Applicant is therefore required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. **Specifically, if Applicant elects either Group I or Group II, Applicant should elect a single molecule from among those referenced above.**

Currently, claim 1 is generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim

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is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species.

MPEP § 809.02(a).

5. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims.

Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined in accordance with the provisions of MPEP § 821.04. **Process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the patentable product** will be entered as a matter of right if the amendment is presented prior to final rejection or allowance, whichever is earlier. Amendments submitted after final rejection are governed by 37 CFR 1.116; amendments submitted after allowance are governed by 37 CFR 1.312.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103, and 112. Until an elected product claim is found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims

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and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowed product claim will not be rejoined. See "Guidance on Treatment of Product and Process Claims in light of *In re Ochiai*, *In re Brouwer* and 35 U.S.C. § 103(b)," 1184 O.G. 86 (March 26, 1996). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, Applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution either to maintain dependency on the product claims or to otherwise include the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.**

Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

6. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the

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record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

7. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Diana B. Johannsen whose telephone number is 571/272-0744. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday and Thursday, 7:30 am-4:00 pm.

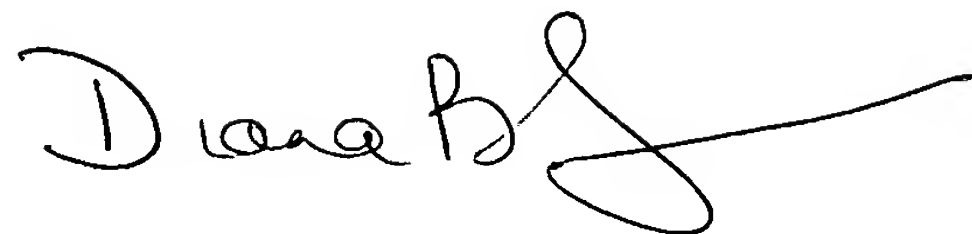
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ram Shukla can be reached at 571/272-0735. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana B. Johannsen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Diana B. Johannsen
Primary Examiner
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3/20/04